

III. REMARKS

This amendment is being submitted in response to the Office Action mailed on 09/25/2003. In this Office Action, claims 1-38 of the above-referenced application are pending, claim 10 stands as allowed, claims 1-6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17-20, and 23-38 stand as rejected, and claims 7, 13, 16, 21, and 22 stand as objected to by the Examiner. In response to this Office Action, claims 2-3, 5-9, 12-18, and 20-24 have been amended and claims 1, 4, 11, 19, and 25-38 have been canceled without prejudice. The Applicant intends to re-file claims 25-38 as part of a continuing application based on the subject matter of the present application. The Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the remaining claims in light of the amendments and remarks made herein.

35 U.S.C. §103(a)

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17-20, and 23-38 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cox et al., Cox et al. in view of Bollinger et al., and Cox et al. and Bollinger et al. and further in view of Schmitthaeusler et al. Regarding these rejections, in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter (see following paragraph) , claims 7, 13, 16, 21, and 22 have been amended to read as independent claims. Claim 2 and claim 3 (which now includes the limitation of original claim 4) and claims 5-6 and 8-9 have all been amended to depend from new independent claim 7. Likewise, claims 12, 14-15, and 17-18 have been amended to depend from new independent claim 13, and claims 20, and 23-24 have been amended to depend from new independent claim 21. Because these claims now depend from independent claims that are believed to be allowable, the Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action, the Examiner allowed original claim 10 and indicated that dependent claims 7, 13, 16, 21, and 22 were objected to as being dependent on rejected base claims, but that these claims would be allowable if re-written in independent form including all the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. The Applicant extends its gratitude to the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. In accordance with the Examiner's comments, claims 7, 13, 16, 21, and 22 have been amended and now read as

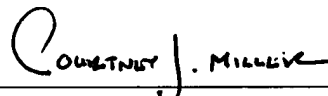
independent claims, each of which incorporates the limitations of its original base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

For the reasons set forth herein, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance, as the claims are believed to define patentably over the relevant prior art. Favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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